

HOME OF HUCK FINN

HOUSE WHERE MARK TWAIN'S HERO LIVED TORN DOWN.

Hannibal, Mo., Where Place Stood, Unconscious of Its Greatness—Anecdote of House and of the Two Mark Twains.

Hannibal, Mo.—Huckleberry Finn's ancient habitation in North Hannibal, near the river front, has passed from the earth. Since Hannibal has admitted that Mark Twain was really a great man it has taken particular pride in the "hoary-headed" domicile and the revenue derived from post-cards showing the structure would have built a much better house. R. H. Coons, the owner of the property, recently had the "Huck" Finn home torn down to erect a row of modern flats, which will have, it is hoped, a livening effect on the somewhat dreamy district of North Hannibal.

A characteristic story is told in connection with the house. One summer day a gentleman from the east came to Hannibal to secure data for a Mark Twain story. He could find Holiday hill easily enough without a guide, because it towered up to the sky on the north end, and prevented the town's further extension unless the good citizens take a notion to tunnel.

An ice man was asked for the direction to Huck Finn's cottage.

"Never heard of him," said the native. "He sure don't live in these parts."

The stranger went west a block and accosted a boy with a fishing rod on his shoulder.

"He don't run with our crowd," he said. "Maybe he lives down by the bridge."

"I'm not looking for Huck Finn himself," said the visitor. "He's dead, but—"

"Then you might try the graveyard," replied the boy. "It's up yonder—the stones is marked, I reckon."

Presently a citizen came along who could furnish the information. Huck's home was only two blocks from where the ice man said "he didn't live in those parts." In the basement door stood a black "auntie," with her hands resting on her hips. She wore a tricolored handkerchief on her head.

"I knows," she said; "you's one o' dem relicky hunters."

"I'm engaged in gathering some material in reference to Mark Twain,"

said the easterner, pleasantly, "and as this is—"

"Well, you needn't go no farder," said the big auntie hospitably. "He's right heah."

"Who's here?"

"Mark Twain."

"In this house?"

"To be sho'!"

"What's he doing here?" asked the surprised visitor.

"Ah doan' know, but yo' kin cum in an' see."

She led the way to another underground apartment, and, with pride, pointed to something on a pallet. The stranger's eyes, gradually becoming accustomed to the semi-light, distinguished an infant pickaninny busily endeavoring to swallow its glossy arm. As the two came and stood by the bed it suspended operations and thoughtfully regarded them out of two big white eyes.

"Quite a baby," said the guest.

"How'd you come to call it Mark Twain?"

"Da tole me if Ah did that, Mistah Sam Clemens, wot' used to lib heah, would sen' 'im sunthin' nice."

"Did he?"

"Ah reckon Mistah Clemens that hit was nice," she said, doubtfully; "he sent 'im a razer an' a lookin' glass."

"Mr. Clemens was grateful?"

"Mebbe so. And he writted to my ole man sayin' if the razer did what he expected he'd be pleased to sen' a tombstone fer th' baby."

"Mason and Dixon's Line."

"Mason and Dixon's line" is a reference to a boundary which was established in the years intervening from 1763 to 1767, between the colonies of Maryland and Virginia on the one side, and that of Pennsylvania on the other side, by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon, who were two English civil engineers. So thoroughly was the allotted task performed by these young Englishmen that an 1849 revision of the survey failed to detect the slightest error. The United States government also, as recently as 1901, has caused the Maryland portion of the noted boundary line to be again revised.

True American Spirit.

Within two years since the great earthquake which undid San Francisco, that heroic city has put \$100,000,000 into building operations, of which, according to trustworthy statements, all but \$4,000,000 came from local sources.

Public Debt Has No Terrors.

The municipality of Vienna has a public debt of exceptional magnitude, which it now proposes to increase by the purchase of coal mines in Moravia.

RAILROAD TO FORT CHURCHILL.

Locomotive Whistle Will End Romance of Canadian North.

Ottawa, Ont.—Civilization will again reach out a long steel arm of railway to snatch from the Indian and trapper a huge chunk of the wilderness.

The dominion house of commons has voted approval to a project to build a line to Fort Churchill on the westward of the Hudson bay. This marks the beginning of the end of the Hudson Bay Company's rule of the northwest territories, a monopoly which the fur traders have held since 1656.

Sufficient funds for the project will at once be appropriated, in spite of the opposition of the Hudson Bay Company. Its completion means speedy access to all to the furred riches of the frozen north and a new outlet for the hardy wheat of the Canadian plains.

Fort Churchill is one of the few trading posts still maintained and governed by the fur monopoly. It is situated at the mouth of the Churchill river, where the canoes of the trappers from the inland lakes slip silently down each spring to exchange their cargoes of pelts for the coin and rum of his majesty's servants. It is 900 miles north of Duluth and 400 miles from the nearest railroad station.

Water connections by means of the river and a score of inland lakes make the fort the key to the commerce of the provinces of Kunwath, Saskatchewan, Athabasca and Northwest Alberta. From Fort Churchill large canoes and small steamers can go 800 miles into the interior. The country is the home of the musk ox, the polar bear, the walrus, the brown bear, the caribou and moose. It is one of the richest game countries in the world.

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STOESSEL IN PRISON

DEFENDER OF PORT ARTHUR NOW A BROKEN MAN.

Loss of Uniform His Greatest Humiliation — Watches from Window Winter Palace Where He Once Was an Honored Guest.

St. Petersburg.—An American newspaper correspondent recently was permitted to interview Gen. Stoessel, the defender of Port Arthur, in prison. Here is what he writes:

Two cold blue eyes examined me through a tiny wicket in the door, and a rough voice said: "What do you want?"

"I wish to see Gen. Stoessel," I answered.

"Have you permission?" said the voice.

"Here is my ticket," I said, producing a card on which it was stated that the commander of the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul had the honor to accord me leave to see the "nobleman Stoessel."

The gate in the high stone wall was opened and a soldier appeared. He then showed the way to the reception room in one of the buildings in the court beyond.

We had not long to wait for Stoessel. Punctually at one o'clock he came into the room. He was dressed in a black frock coat, his voice was weak and he looked older and more wrinkled than when he was on trial a few months ago. He is now a broken man who realizes that he has lost in the game of life.

"Oh, yes, one can live here, and in sufficient comfort," he replied to our inquiries about his life, "but it is a vegetable existence. More than anything I feel the loss of my uniform."



MADAME STOESSEL

For 40 years I have worn the dress of an officer and now I am not allowed to put on the coat of a common soldier or to use a military cap.

"How does your excellence spend the day?" I asked.

"It begins very early for St. Petersburg," he replied, "at nine o'clock they bring the samovar and I take tea. The authorities do not provide bread and we have to provide that for ourselves. After a light breakfast I dress and go out for a walk in the little garden. At one o'clock I and the other officers imprisoned in the fortress dine together and after the meal I always find my wife waiting to see me. We have a right to receive friends only once a week, but the czar has accorded me the special privilege to see my dear wife every day. She remains until three o'clock and is not permitted to stay longer. When she is gone I stroll in the garden for a little and then I settle down to work. I am writing my memoirs."

"Perhaps you will allow me to see your room," I said. "I have special permission from the